

Sustainability Committee
Minutes of Meeting

May 14, 2014

Present: Lynn Stoddard, Vera Ward, Susannah Everett, Nick DeNegre, Meredith Metcalf, Alex Citurs, Leslie Richam, Ann Marie Denegre, Mark Denegre, Matt Denegre, Nick Denegre, Jennifer Kaufman (staff), Virginia Walton (staff)

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 by Stoddard.

Approval of the March 12 and April 9, 2014 minutes was deferred until there is a meeting quorum.

Walton talked about the Georgetown University Energy Competition. The competition is intended to motivate small communities to reduce their residential energy consumption using natural gas and electricity utilities as the measure. The competition lasts two years for the communities that are selected as the semifinalists. The prize is \$5 million for the winning community. Although Mansfield does not have a large number of households that use natural gas, the competition does allow contiguous communities to work together. Stoddard will ask Windham if they want to work with Mansfield. If they are interested, then a meeting will be set up to review the application more closely. The application deadline is June 30, 2014.

Nick Denegre, an Eastern Connecticut State University student, showed the committee the findings from one of his school projects where he mapped low income households in Mansfield and Windham that need heat and food assistance. Using GIS he mapped the degree of concentration by sectors in both towns. Members thought this kind of information could be useful to target households for the energy competition. Nick's contact information is ndenegre@gmail.com; 860-304-8333.

Kaufman gave an update on the Mansfield Tomorrow Plan. The Planning and Zoning Commission is meeting weekly to review the plan. Once all the edits are made, Planning and Zoning will review the final draft, which will then go to a public hearing.

Kaufman reported that the UConn Extension Service submitted an application for a conservation innovation grant that would fund an analysis of the farmland in Coventry, Mansfield and Tolland and assist in getting more land into production by making farmland owners aware of the programs that are currently available to them.

Walton reported on the March 31, 2014 climate impact, mitigation and adaptation program put on by UConn. She also reported on two projects that the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) is involved with. One is to establish a repair clinic where people can bring their broken items to be repaired by volunteers who have expertise in fixing them. Access Agency is collaborating with SWAC in this effort. Walton is working on a proposal to the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to allow the incorporation of food scraps into the leaf compost pile at the Mansfield transfer station.

Kaufman reported that one of the recommendations of the Mansfield Tomorrow Plan is to permanently preserve publicly owned land. Since UConn is currently working on their master plan, this may be an

opportunity to advocate that UConn move in the same direction as the Town. The Conservation Commission is considering their role as advocate for permanent preservation of some of UConn's land. Staff will keep the committee apprised of the Conservation Commission's actions.

Future agenda items:

1. The committee would like to invite the new Mansfield Public Works Director to discuss bike and pedestrian access along Route 195 where the water line is going.
2. Report by Rich Miller on the national climate change conference that he attended from May 12 through 16, 2014.
3. Early fall– presentation by Rich Miller to town committees and commissions on UConn's environmental initiatives.
4. Late fall - A meeting that includes town committees to learn about ways to help mitigate and adapt to climate change and provide key considerations for each committee depending on their role. The Mansfield Tomorrow Plan can be used as the framework for the discussion. Gary Yohe, Professor of Economics at Wesleyan College, and co-author of the recently released National Climate Assessment, was recommended as the facilitator. Everett suggested including teachers and educators in the program.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Virginia Walton